

Christian Cursing

I. Introduction

We approach a delicate, yet important, subject to all the saints today and especially to those in the Lord's churches, that is: the matter of "Christian Cursing." The Christian of today thinks nothing of taking upon himself the ways and appearances of the world. In our society nearly every one professes belief in the Lord but few give evidence of repentant, converted hearts that is characteristic of all who are truly saved. An area that points out this pseudo-christian trend is the utilization of the language of the world. To directly accuse professing people of using God's Holy name in vain as an outright, deliberate curse word would be an overstatement. Yet, many euphemisms for God are heard every day and often truly born-again saints are guilty.

A. What is a Euphemism?

Let me give Daniel Webster's report: "...to use good or auspicious word for an evil or inauspicious word..." of good sound.

1. It is the use of a word or phrase that is less expressive or direct but considered less distasteful, less offensive, etc. than another.
2. A word or phrase so substituted. Thus, it is a form of cursing that replaces a direct curse word with a more acceptable word which in effect does the same thing.

B. The question must be asked of modern-day Christians: Do you ever use the name of the Lord in vain?

1. The word "vain" means "empty," "as nothing," or "lightly." When referring to the subject at hand, it applies to "false-swearing" or "light-swearing." These are words that have little meaning, or an empty purpose or something that is said lightly.
2. Some will use the name of the Lord, yet, go on to defend their position by saying, "I didn't mean anything by it." Others make a defence by claiming that God knows our weakness and therefore will forgive us. However, premeditated sin in God's sight is inexcusable.

C. Are we responsible for our words?

1. What does the Scripture say in the 3rd commandment? Ex. 20:7, "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.*" The words, "in vain" mean empty, without thought, or lightly. This is clearly a violation of the 3rd commandment and that is a transgression of God's law which is SIN in God's book!
2. The TRUTH is that God still holds all of us accountable for our words: Matt. 12:36-37, "*But I say unto you, That every idle word that men speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*"

Your swiftest defence may be to quickly bring up the fact that God's saints will not stand in the judgment of sinners. That is true. But beware that words have a way of describing what is in the heart. Matt. 12:34, "*O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" While the truly saved will not be judged as to their eternal position in Christ by their performance of works, it is difficult to believe that born-again saints, those changed by the Spirit of God within and have been taken out of the pig-pen of sin, will want to return to it. Scripture says that a pig returns to the mire but that is because of its nature. Therefore, the person who says he is a saint of God but by nature loves the practices of the world and is not convicted of the use of sinful words of the world, that one is of the world.

Ignorance is no excuse to sin when we have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to keep us in truth. So, let us develop and identify some words. This will not be an exhaustive list but rather examples.

II. Words that are used which involve God's name in vain or with lightness. These definitions will be according to Webster's Dictionary. Any good dictionary will give you all of these.

A. Euphemisms of God.

1. Gosh: "...an interjection, an exclamation of surprise: a euphemism for God." the world would make light of the use of this word but the saints ought to heed the meaning of words. It is the using of the word "gosh" in the place of the word "God" to make it seem less offensive.
2. Good: (used by itself or together with other words as in "good-night," etc.)
 - a. The word "good" is often used as an adjective with a descriptive intent by comparison. However, the etymology of the word shows that it is not an innocent word when used as an interjection. Etymology: from the word "gode;" Anglo-Saxon, god, akin to German, Gut.
 - b. Used as an interjection: "In some exclamatory phrases expressing surprise, consternation, etc. (e.g. good-gracious! good-grief! good-night!) Good is an euphemism for God." That includes forms of the word goodness, even when we personalized and say "goodness me," there is a wrong connotation and it is just a replacement for being able to use the name of the Lord.
3. Golly: "it is an interjection, an exclamation of surprise, etc.: a euphemism of God." It is a milder, socially acceptable way to use God's name in vain. This also includes all the shortened forms as in "gol" (gol-darn).
4. Gracious: "as an interjection, an exclamation of surprise, it is a euphemism of God."
5. Gee: "it is an interjection (a euphemistic contraction of Jesus), (slang), an exclamation of surprise, etc." All forms of Gee, Geez or Cheez, Cheese, Cheece,

Sheece, still relate back to the Lord Jesus Christ when used as an exclamatory remark.

6. Jiminy Crickets: has been used by many professing people, however, it is also a euphemistic expression of Jesus Christ. It is just a way to try to exchange acceptable words with which to euphemistically use our Lord's name lightly. It is an interjection.
 7. Many forms of expressions as Great day, Toledo, etc. While the words may not in themselves mean anything wrong, their usage makes them a replacement for the Lord in an exclamatory remark.
 8. The expression "man at the wheel" has a direct reference to the Sovereign God of the universe who is in control of all things, but here euphemistically applied and taken lightly or disbelieved altogether. It is not a light thing to acknowledge God's sovereignty in an empty statement. For He is Sovereign.
 9. Egad: "(igad,' egad') interj. (prob. ah god), a softened or euphemistic oath."
- B. The usurping of God's authority of judgment or making light of His character.
1. Darn: (all forms of this word included) an interjection, a euphemism of the word damn and is a form of a curse. A curse is never inflicted seriously except it call upon God to do the damning. It places the curser in the seat of authority in God's place to sit judgment over the one being cursed and makes God subordinate to the one using the curse word to inflict damnation at their will. It is calling God to take ones own side and condemn the other person to Hell. It matters not whether the person says, "dag-nabit," or "gosh-darn," or "darnation," all of these words use God's authority and name lightly and wrongfully.
 2. Holy Cow: Holiness is an attribute, a perfection of God in which we view God separated from all sin (morally and spiritually). A cow has no soul, it is a-moral and is without a spirit. These kind of words have a way of making light of God's character. There also is nothing Holy about smoke. It too, is a euphemistic way of using a word with a wrong intent to make it seem acceptable, and with lightness (in vain).
 3. The Lord willing and the creeks don't rise: is a mockery of the Lord's sovereignty. As a matter of fact He does control the creeks, therefore, the two are not contrasts.

(Beware of telling of jokes that use the person of God as a character within a joke. And while it need not directly attack or directly mock His being, it does use Him in a lightness or manner of foolish jesting.) Eph. 5:4, "*Neither filthiness, or foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*"

III. Conclusion:

There is no intent to go into all the foul, filthy words of modern-day vocabulary, it should not be necessary. Eph. 4:29, "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*" Col. 3:8, "*But now ye also put off all of these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*"

The Jews, as was their human custom, would use God to call upon Him to be their witness in oaths. They refrained from using His Holy name in conversation because of His power and Holiness. They had first-hand historical experience for disregarding His holiness. Yet, because they were not born-again their actions were often only legalistic in nature and not because of their love and relationship to the Lord. They were commanded to "not swear" in lightness. Matt. 5:34, "*But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by Heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem: for it is the city of the great King...*" (vs.37), "*But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*" Israel was taking oaths lightly and calling on God to back their position. Jesus said just say yes or no and back your word with action.

What's wrong with using sound proper words? Why do Christians need the crude, rank, unwholesome, blasphemous cursing language of the world? Look at Col. 4:6, "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*"

To use euphemisms for God is the same as if His own name were used. Christian cursing and cussing is getting more popular and socially acceptable as the world infiltrates the circle of the Lord's people. Many of the New Evangelical churches (which are no more than some type of religious organization of people) are using this modern jargon to identify themselves with the world and to show them that they are just like them. Well, maybe they are. But that does not justify us.

Remember, it is not always the words by themselves that we use, but often it is the intent of the expression, whether anger, frustration or disagreement that we feel toward God.

Now what can we do? It is simple. Don't use words (actual or euphemistically) that will break fellowship with our Saviour. And as important: learn to direct our thoughts, words, and feelings to the Lord. He is Sovereign. He is coming soon!!!

~ J.W. Hiebert